



DELAWARE & LEHIGH
NATIONAL HERITAGE CORRIDOR



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape 2026 MINI GRANT GUIDELINES AND INSTRUCTIONS

Content Includes:

- ✓ *Overview*
- ✓ *Eligibility*
- ✓ *Funding*
- ✓ *Timeline*
- ✓ *Review Process*
- ✓ *FAQs*

The information contained in these guidelines is important for the successful completion of your grant application.

Contact Brit Kondravy, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (DLNHC) Conservation Manager/Lehigh Valley Greenways Co-Lead, to discuss your project ideas or answer questions:
(484) 215 - 6227 or conservation@delawareandlehigh.org

I. Overview

Lehigh Valley Greenways (LVG) is one of eight Conservation Landscapes supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. The Greenways Partnership includes more than 25 organizations and municipal partners dedicated to the conservation of and connection to natural resources in the Lehigh Valley region.

The Lehigh Valley Greenways Mini Grant Program is a reimbursement grant program funded by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and administered by the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (DLNHC). The purpose of the mini grant program is to inspire collaborative, strategic approaches to regional conservation and/or outdoor recreation opportunities and to implement ready-to-go, 12-16-month projects that protect and promote the natural resources of the Lehigh Valley and advance the goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways.

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape Vision: Lehigh Valley communities are linked to greenways, trails, and outdoor experiences resulting in stronger local economies and improved public health, green infrastructure and natural resources.

Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape Goals:

Goal 1: Land Conservation & Restoration - Conserve critical landscapes, restore buffered stream corridors, and promote best management practices

Goal 2: Outdoor Recreation & Trail Connections - Connect people to greenway and trail opportunities to promote healthy living, recreation, and the region's green assets

Goal 3: Community Revitalization – Support community revitalization through green infrastructure that enhances the quality of life

Goal 4: Local Education & Outreach – Promote understanding of our natural environment and its benefits to our communities

2026 Mini Grant Program Priorities:

- (Municipalities) Adopt model ordinances and/or an official map to protect natural resources and improve bicycle/pedestrian connections
- Implement ecological restoration projects (ex. stream habitat improvements, riparian buffers, native grass/wildflower meadows, rain gardens, bioswales, and no-mow areas along streams, trails and in parks)
- Host equitable educational events, trainings and workshops to advance the goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways
- Improve THE LINK, Lehigh Valley's growing multi-use trail network (ex. close trail gaps, install safety and directional signage, improve stormwater management, create safe road crossings, add trail amenities)
- Incorporate ecological resiliency into relevant projects

II. **Eligibility**

Who is eligible?

- Non-profit organizations with tax-exempt 501(c)3 status **and** registered with PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations ****Selected applicants will need to provide proof of both 501c3 and BCO registration**
- Municipalities, municipal agencies (COG, MPO, municipal authority), county conservation districts
- Educational institutions (Lehigh Valley colleges and universities, public/private schools)

What kind of project is eligible?

Eligible project types are educational programs/workshops, special purpose studies, or implementation projects. Eligible projects should advance the Lehigh Valley Greenways vision and goals and be consistent with previously completed local, county, and regional plans such as open space, greenway, trail, recreation, comprehensive, watershed and/or rivers conservation plans. The list of plans and recommendations directly addressed by the proposed project should be included in the application narrative.

Projects should be 12-16-months (June 2026 – September 2027), with secured match totaling 20% of the total project cost. Projects must be located in the Lehigh Valley region (Lehigh or Northampton counties). Grant requests that fall outside Lehigh and Northampton counties should be submitted to a separate [Conservation Landscape](#) (if within one of their regions). Grant requests near the Kittatinny Ridge within Lehigh and Northampton Counties should contact us to discuss whether they are best suited for Lehigh Valley Greenways mini grants or Kittatinny Ridge Conservation Landscape funding.

What projects or expenses are NOT eligible?

Lehigh Valley Greenways mini grants will not fund membership drives or fundraising, real estate acquisition or property easements, or any projects not entirely related to at least one of the four goals of Lehigh Valley Greenways.

Ineligible grant expenditures include:

- Reimbursement for any expenses prior to the effective start date listed on signed agreement.
- Award items, free giveaways, or promotional items (certificates, trophies, plaques, t-shirts, hats, magnets, pins, etc.) – (does not apply to matching funds, only to reimbursable grant funds).
- Indirect costs, general operations or overhead charges (rent, utilities, website hosting).
- Power equipment (lawn mowers, chain saws, weedwhackers).
- Grants, scholarships or fellowships to be given by the grant recipient to a third party. (Grant funds may be used to pay up to \$100 a day for either substitute teachers or teacher stipends to enable teachers to participate in Lehigh Valley Greenways grant funded programs. Grant funds may also be used to provide classroom supplies purchased by the grantee to enable teachers to implement new programs, but not to provide cash payments to teachers for these supplies.)

Application Restrictions

Each applicant is limited to a maximum of two project applications per grant round. Applicants with multiple project ideas are encouraged to contact Brit Kondravy for advice on prioritizing your projects. Applications that have been funded by another Conservation Landscape are ineligible. Applicants are strongly discouraged from repeatedly applying for mini grant funding to support the same project.

III. Funding

- Funding for the Lehigh Valley Greenways Mini Grant Program comes from Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Environmental Stewardship Fund through a grant to the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, which administers the mini grant program. **All mini grant recipients will need to include the DCNR following funding citation and three accompanying logos on any printed materials, products or signs (brochures, flyers, completed plans, educational handouts, etc.).**

“This project was completed in partnership with the Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape. Funding was provided in part by a grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, Environmental Stewardship Fund, administered by Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.”
- For the 2026 round, \$100,000 is available.
- Grant requests shall be a minimum of \$1,000 and not to exceed \$20,000, with total project costs at least twice the grant request. Note, awards totaling between \$10,000-\$20,000 will be primarily reserved for resource management and infrastructures projects. Requested grant amounts should be rounded down to the nearest \$100 increment.
- Mini grants are on a **reimbursement basis** so the mini grantee will be expected to expend eligible project costs then submit for 50% reimbursement of total costs up to the awarded mini grant amount.
- All mini grants must be matched with cash and/or eligible non-cash (in-kind) contributions totaling 20% of the total project cost.
 - Example: A \$25,000 project = \$5,000 (Minimum Eligible Match totaling 20% of total project cost) + \$20,000 (Maximum Grant Request totaling 80% of total project cost).
- Your application **MUST** include commitment letters from any partner organization(s) that states the agreed upon donation amount or value to be used as match. Lehigh Valley Greenways mini grants may not be used to fulfill match requirements for other DCNR funded grant projects and DCNR funds may not be used as match for mini grants.
- Mini grantees are responsible for following the competitive bidding requirements that apply to their organizations. These vary based on whether the organization is a municipality or a non-profit. Mini

grantees not familiar with the applicable bidding requirements are strongly advised to consult with their solicitor/attorney.

- Reimbursement may be applied for as one complete payment or broken into two payment requests, one during the project and one requesting the remaining funds after completion of the project. If requesting two payments, at least ten percent (10%) of the mini grant award will be held until project closeout.
- In-house professional services (grantee staff) eligible for reimbursement. It is recommended that no more than 50% of staff time dedicated to the awarded project be submitted under the grant request. However, projects requiring greater staff time will be considered on a case-to-case basis. The billable rate officially established by the grantee's governing body can include hourly wage, fringe benefits, and operational overhead costs.

IV. Timeline

2026 Mini Grant Schedule

Feb. 12, 2025 – 2026 LVG Mini Grant Pre-application meeting at 10:30am via Zoom. Register here:

https://us06web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_se-K1FffTNOlyfqEfIMQdQ

*** All potential applicants are requested to send a representative to the pre-application webinar or schedule a separate meeting with Brit Kondravy to discuss your projects. Sending a representative to the pre-application meeting is strongly preferred. Registration is required for this meeting.*

February 13, 2026 – 2026 LVG Mini Grant Application Round Opens

March 27, 2026 – Grant application round closes at 4pm. ***Mini grant applicants are required to submit an online application by 4:00pm at <https://lvgreenways.org/mini-grants/apply-for-a-mini-grant/>*

May 13, 2026 Projects are reviewed and selected by committee

May 25, 2026 – Mini grant awards are announced, and grant agreements emailed

June 1, 2026 – Project start date **only if agreements are signed and returned to DLNHC*

November 30, 2027 – Project completion and closeout

V. Review Process

Grant awards are made on a competitive basis. Applications will be initially screened to ensure all application requirements have been submitted. Then applications will be reviewed by a small committee of current Lehigh Valley Greenways partners or representatives from other conservation landscapes who meet DCNR conflict of interest requirements. Applications are ranked based on:

- 1)** completeness of the application (scope of work, budget, timeline, narrative describing relevant LVG goals and existing local plans, confirmed match with commitment letters, drawings/maps/photos, partner list, letters of support) and
- 2)** how well the project:
 - Aligns with 2026 priorities
 - Supports Lehigh Valley Greenways vision/goals
 - Implements actions listed in existing local plans
 - Identifies and secures required match
 - Promotes partner collaboration
 - Includes the use of best management practices
 - Incorporates ecological resilience strategies if applicable

The review committee reserves the right to request additional information to supplement the submitted application as needed. Applications will be listed as SELECTED for funding, NOT SELECTED for funding, or held as a HIGH VALUE PROJECT to be considered for funding if resources become available before the next mini

grant application process.

**For more details, examples of funded projects, and a list of FAQs,
visit LVgreenways.org/mini-grants/.**

For Grant Assistance, contact:

Brit Kondravy

DLNHC Conservation Manager/Lehigh Valley Greenways Co-Lead

610-923-3548 ext. 225



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